

In the Claims:

Please cancel Claims 1-3.

Please add new Claims 4 through 38 as follows:

1-3. (Canceled)

4. (New) An electronic educational toy having a housing for teaching, comprising:

a plurality of audio prompts output by a speaker enclosed within the toy housing, a prompt including a question or instruction having at least one correct response, the question or instruction designed to encourage a child to make a cognitive decision and indicate the cognitive decision by causing contact with a touch-sensitive surface, the touch-sensitive surface formed on at least a portion of a substantially planar surface of the toy housing;

one or more sensors capable of sensing the location of where the touch-sensitive surface has been contacted;

a contact capable of occurring and being sensed in arbitrary child-defined locations on the touch-sensitive surface, the occurrence of contact on the touch-sensitive surface in response to the question or instruction indicating the cognitive decision by the child corresponding to the question or instruction;

a processor enclosed within the toy housing capable of: a) executing educational software, b) receiving information from the one or more sensors corresponding to the occurrence of contact by the child on the touch-sensitive surface and c) using the information from the sensors to determine whether the child's cognitive decision as indicated by the occurrence of contact by the child on the touch-sensitive surface corresponds to a correct response to the question or instruction;

a first audio feedback response output by the speaker enclosed within the toy housing, the first audio feedback response indicating to the child that the decision indicated by the child's contact with the touch-sensitive surface corresponds to a correct response to the question or instruction; and

a second audio feedback response output by the speaker enclosed within the toy housing, the second audio feedback response indicating to the child that the decision indicated by the child's contact with the touch-sensitive surface is something other than a correct response to the question or instruction,

the toy housing enclosing the speaker, at least a portion of the one or more sensors and the processor, the housing having a substantially planar surface, at least a portion of which comprises the touch-sensitive surface.

5. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 4, wherein the child causes contact with the touch-sensitive surface by placing an object on the touch-sensitive surface.

6. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 4, wherein the processor generates questions or instructions with different levels of difficulty.

7. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 6, wherein the processor generates more difficult questions depending on the user having provided correct previous answers.

8. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 4, further comprising a second prompt for a correct response to the question or instruction in the event the decision by the child does not correspond to a correct response to the question or instruction.

9. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 4, further comprising a plurality of images on the touch-sensitive surface to facilitate the interaction between the educational software and the child, wherein the plurality of images on the touch-sensitive surface can be changed.

10. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 4, wherein at least a portion of the educational software is capable of being loaded into the toy by users thereof.

11. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 10, wherein at least a portion of the educational software is capable of being loaded via a portable memory capable of being inserted by the user into a portable memory receiving device associated with the toy.

12. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 10, wherein at least a portion of the educational software is capable of being downloaded from a remote location over a data transmission medium.

13. (New) An electronic educational toy having a housing for teaching, comprising:

- a plurality of audio prompts output by a speaker enclosed within the toy housing, a prompt including a question or instruction having at least one correct response, the question or instruction designed to encourage a child to make a cognitive decision and indicate the cognitive decision by causing contact with a touch-sensitive surface, the touch-sensitive surface formed on at least a portion of a substantially planar surface of the toy housing;

- one or more sensors capable of sensing the location of where the touch-sensitive surface has been contacted;

- a contact capable of occurring and being sensed in arbitrary child-defined locations on the touch-sensitive surface, the occurrence of contact on the touch-sensitive surface in response to the question or instruction indicating the cognitive decision by the child corresponding to the question or instruction;

- a processor enclosed within the toy housing capable of: a) executing educational software, b) receiving information from the one or more sensors corresponding to the occurrence of contact by the child on the touch-sensitive surface and c) using the information from the sensors to determine whether the child's cognitive decision as indicated by the establishment of contact by the child on the touch-sensitive surface corresponds to a correct response to the question or instruction;

- an audio feedback response output by the speaker, the audio feedback response indicating to the child whether the decision indicated by the child's contact

with the touch-sensitive surface corresponds to a correct response to the question or instruction;

wherein the processor generates questions or instructions with different levels of difficulty.

14. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 13, wherein the child causes contact with the touch-sensitive surface by placing an object on the touch-sensitive surface.

15. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 13, wherein the processor generates more difficult questions depending on the user having provided correct previous answers.

16. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 13, further comprising a second prompt for a correct response to the question or instruction in the event the decision by the child does not correspond to a correct response to the question or instruction.

17. (New) An electronic educational toy having a housing for teaching, comprising:

a plurality of audio prompts output by a speaker enclosed within the toy housing, a prompt including a question or instruction having at least one correct response, the question or instruction designed to encourage a child to make a cognitive decision and indicate the cognitive decision by causing contact with a touch-sensitive surface, the touch-sensitive surface formed on at least a portion of a substantially planar surface of the toy housing;

one or more sensors capable of sensing the location of where the touch-sensitive surface has been contacted;

a contact capable of occurring and being sensed in arbitrary child-defined locations on the touch-sensitive surface, the occurrence of contact on the touch-sensitive surface in response to the question or instruction indicating the cognitive decision by the child corresponding to the question or instruction;

a processor enclosed within the toy housing capable of: a) executing educational software; b) receiving information from the one or more sensors

corresponding to the occurrence of contact by the child on the touch-sensitive surface and c) using the information from the sensors to determine whether the child's cognitive decision as indicated by the occurrence of contact by the child on the touch-sensitive surface corresponds to a correct response to the question or instruction;

an audio feedback response output by the speaker, the audio feedback response indicating to the child whether the decision indicated by the child's contact with the touch-sensitive surface corresponds to a correct response to the question or instruction; and

a plurality of images on the touch-sensitive surface to facilitate the interaction between the child and the toy, wherein the plurality of images on the touch-sensitive surface can be changed.

18. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 17, wherein the child causes contact with the touch-sensitive surface by placing an object on the touch-sensitive surface.

19. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 17, wherein the toy housing encloses the speaker, at least a portion of the one or more sensors, and the processor, the housing having a substantially planar surface, at least a portion of which comprises the touch-sensitive surface.

20. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 17, further comprising a second prompt for a correct response to the question or instruction in the event the decision by the child does not correspond to a correct response to the question or instruction.

21. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 17, further comprising educational software capable of being loaded into the toy by users thereof.

22. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 21, wherein at least a portion of the educational software is capable of being loaded via a portably memory.

23. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 21, wherein at least a portion of the educational software is capable of being downloaded from a remote location over a data transmission medium.

24. (New) An electronic educational toy having a housing for teaching, comprising:

- a plurality of audio prompts output by a speaker enclosed within the toy housing, a prompt including a question or instruction having at least one correct response, the question or instruction designed to encourage a child to make a cognitive decision and indicate the cognitive decision by causing contact with a touch-sensitive surface, the touch-sensitive surface formed on at least a portion of a substantially planar surface of the toy housing;

- one or more sensors capable of sensing the location of where the touch-sensitive surface has been contacted;

- a contact capable of occurring and being sensed in arbitrary child-defined locations on the touch-sensitive surface, the occurrence of contact on the touch-sensitive surface in response to the question or instruction indicating the cognitive decision by the child corresponding to the question or instruction;

- a processor enclosed within the toy housing capable of: a) executing educational software, b) receiving information from the one or more sensors corresponding to the occurrence of contact by the child on the touch-sensitive surface and c) using the information from the sensors to determine whether the child's cognitive decision as indicated by the occurrence of contact by the child on the touch-sensitive surface corresponds to a correct response to the question or instruction;

- an audio feedback response output by the speaker, the audio feedback response indicating to the child whether the decision indicated by the child's contact with the touch-sensitive surface corresponds to a correct response to the question or instruction; and

- educational software capable of being loaded onto the toy by users thereof.

25. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 24, wherein the child causes contact with the touch-sensitive surface by placing an object on the touch-sensitive surface.

26. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 24, wherein the toy housing encloses the speaker, at least a portion of the one or more sensors and the processor, the housing having a substantially planar surface, at least a portion of which comprises the touch-sensitive surface.

27. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 24, further comprising a second prompt for a correct response to the question or instruction in the event the decision by the child does not correspond to a correct response to the question or instruction.

28. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 24, wherein at least a portion of the educational software is capable of being loaded via a portably memory.

29. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 24, wherein at least a portion of the educational software is capable of being downloaded from a remote location over a data transmission medium.

30. (New) An educational toy for teaching, comprising:
a support structure, said support structure supporting a substantially planar touch sensitive surface capable of receiving input at irregular continuous locations over at least a substantial portion of the surface from the child by the child causing contact with the surface;
a plurality of audio prompts output by an audio output device, an audio prompt including an instruction or question designed to encourage a child to make a cognitive decision;

wherein in response to the audio prompt the child is intended to cognitively select from among a plurality of possible choices and indicate the selection by causing contact with the touch-sensitive surface, the selection being the child's attempt to make a correct cognitive decision;

the touch-sensitive surface facilitating the detection of the location of the contact caused by the child on the touch-sensitive surface in response to the audio prompt; and

a processor capable of determining whether the detected location of the contact on the touch-sensitive surface corresponds to the correct cognitive decision.

31. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 30, wherein the child causes contact with the touch-sensitive surface by placing an object on the touch-sensitive surface.

32. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 30, wherein the processor generates questions or instructions with different levels of difficulty.

33. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 32, wherein the processor generates more difficult questions depending on the user having provided correct previous answers.

34. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 30, further comprising a second prompt for a correct response to the question or instruction in the event the decision by the child does not correspond to a correct response to the question or instruction.

35. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 30, further comprising a plurality of images on the touch-sensitive surface to facilitate the interaction between the educational software and the child, wherein the plurality of images on the touch-sensitive surface can be changed.

36. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 30, wherein at least a portion of the educational software is capable of being loaded into the toy by users thereof.

37. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 36, wherein at least a portion of the educational software is capable of being loaded via a portable memory capable of being inserted by the user into a portable memory receiving device associated with the toy.

38. (New) An electronic educational toy as in claim 36, wherein at least a portion of the educational software is capable of being downloaded from a remote location over a data transmission medium.